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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **HB 5223**

#### ***AN ACT INCREASING FUNDING FOR ELDERLY NUTRITION.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the social services commissioner to increase the fees for home-delivered meals, including “meals on wheels,” under the Connecticut Home-Care Program for the Elderly (CHCPE) to cover reasonable provider costs and minimize participant copayments. In practice, the current fees are \$4.75 for a single hot meal and \$8.76 for one hot meal and one cold meal.

The bill requires, rather than allows, the commissioner annually to increase fees in the fee schedule he must establish for “meals on wheels” and the following services: homemaker, chore person, companion, respite and adult day care, case management and assessment, transportation, mental health counseling, and elderly foster care. The increase must be based on the increased service costs.

The bill appropriates \$3.7 million in FY 15 from the General Fund to the Aging Department for the Elderly Nutrition Program, which provides congregate and home-delivered meals to people age 60 and older and their spouses statewide. (The program is primarily funded by state and federal money.)

It also eliminates obsolete language.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon passage for the fee provisions; July 1, 2014 for the appropriation.

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### ***CHCPE***

CHCPE is administered by the Department of Social Services’ Alternative Unit through contracts with three area “access” agencies to manage and coordinate client care in five regions of the state.

***Elderly Nutrition Program***

The Aging Department operates this program, which provides meals either at congregate sites, known as “senior community cafes,” or delivers them to the homes of people too frail to cook or go to the congregate sites. Disabled people living in housing facilities that are congregate meal sites can also receive meals. Meals are free, although voluntary contributions are encouraged.

***Related Bill***

HB 244, reported favorably by the Aging Committee, requires the social services commissioner annually to increase the fees, under CHCPE, for providing home care services to persons with disabilities by at least 2%.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Aging Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea    12    Nay   0    (03/11/2014)